

The failure of Martha and Mary and the disciples to rise to this higher view of life even after months of intimate communion with Jesus Christ, reminds us how easy it is to pass by the 'great sight' without taking off one's shoes.

The teeming air and prodigal,
Which drops its azure over all,
Is full of immortalities
That look on us with unseen eyes.

But the immortalities may be neglected by us, as they were not seen by the sorrowing sisters. The grandeur of the Easter message is that it convinced the disciples of the immortalities and of their magnificence. All who live on this side of the empty grave in the garden, have the witness that was wanting in Bethany. Such dull and faithless scholarship as makes the Master groan in the spirit, becomes much more blameworthy after 'He is risen.'

The Pilgrim's Progress.

BY THE REV. JOHN KELMAN, D.D., EDINBURGH.

The Second Part.

From the House of Gaius to the Delectable Mountains.

IN this section of the allegory neither the characters nor the subjects are such as to warrant the style of treatment which we have given to the earlier divisions of this part. There are many incidents and a remarkable tripping style which suggests a continuous rather than a topical treatment. The characters of Christiana and Mercy are considerably developed in it, and remind us, more than once, of Mr. Lynch's suggestion that the model for the former was Bunyan's second wife, and for the latter the wife of his youth.¹

There is an unusual lightness in the style, and now and again an actual play of words, as when By-ends comes to an ill end, or when certain prove themselves rather strangers to pilgrims than strangers and pilgrims. Also the allegory is even more elastic here than formerly, and admits the two Scripture characters of Gaius and Mnason apparently without any significance except such as may be found in the fact that they are mentioned honourably in the New Testament. To pass from such symbolical characters as the Interpreter and Good-will to historical ones like these, is to change the mode of the work from that of the Morality to that of the Miracle Play. Whatever other significance there may be in the incidents of the Inn of Gaius and the House of

¹ Brown, ii. 28.

Mnason, nothing of that is made clear; and it is perhaps safest to take them simply as incidents of the road to carry forward the story and introduce conversations.

Before we come to Gaius' house, however, we have a curious little notice of a momentary false alarm. A very much scared man comes running to tell them of a danger which turns out to be nothing at all. The incident may perhaps be introduced simply to break the monotony and enliven the tale, or perhaps it may be of the nature of a warning to be wary. Great-heart remains throughout this section the same extraordinary man, whose form of religion is such that he has no misgiving in it whatever.

Mr. A. C. Benson says of Great-heart's point of view, 'What an extraordinary form of religion it all was! There was not the least misgiving in the mind of the authors. The Bible was to him a perfectly unquestioned manifesto of the mind of God, and solved everything and anything.'²

They go into the inn without knocking, and are provided with two rooms and a plain supper. The cook, with the name of 'Taste-what-is-good,' reminds one of similar names frequently invented by Langland, such as Piers the Ploughman's wife's name, Work-when-it-is-time.

They vote in formal fashion, using the parliamentary phrase 'content' for assenting, and there is an old-fashioned familiarity between host and

² Benson, *Beside Still Waters*, 128-129.

guests which tells of the hospitalities and friendliness of the inns of ancient days. It is a very different host from Chaucer's, and yet there is the same personal interest in his people, and the same air of importance in their management. He is a rather expansive and prosy old gentleman, who has not very much to say, but says it at great length and with a complacent air of being extraordinarily well pleased with himself, and of having found that the honest and Christian life has paid him well. He cannot lay a trencher without pointing a moral; and indeed the physical and the spiritual food are not a little mixed in this incident.

The most curious part of Gaius' conversation relates to the genealogy of Christian. This he traces partly from Scripture, and partly from Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, back along the line of Stephen and James, Paul and Peter, Ignatius, Romanus, and Polycarp. It is needless to point out how here, again, the allegory breaks down. The name of Christian before his conversion was Graceless, and his town Destruction, so that this family tree can only be regarded in a spiritual sense. But the allegory is never held very firmly in this portion, for, while the boys are still small enough to be put to bed by Mercy, as by their nurse, we find immediately afterwards arrangements being made for the marriage of two of them. The finest point in the story of that first day in Gaius' house is the loyalty of the children to their father's memory.

There is a good word spoken in a rather patronizing way for women, and a long account of what various women did for Jesus, which ends up with the somewhat meagre conclusion, 'Women, therefore, are highly favoured, and show by these things that they are sharers with us in the grace of life.' The old gentleman is an inveterate matchmaker, and sets Christiana looking for wives for her sons in the most shameless fashion. Matthew eventually marries Mercy, while Gaius, with remarkable perspicuity and good judgment, secures James for his own daughter. It is really very difficult to forgive the marriage of Matthew to Mercy. Matthew certainly needed Mercy in every sense of the word, but, for the young lady's sake, Matthew seems poor enough. Even in this section Matthew drivels continually, telling us how the cloth makes him feel hungry, and asking questions of the usual silliness. 'May we eat

apples, since it was they by and with which the serpent beguiled our first mother?' And the subject of eating apples immediately gets him back to his favourite theme, his sickness after his own feast upon the forbidden fruit.

The symbolism of the supper table is very curious and fanciful with its wave-breast and heave-shoulder, its significant wine and milk, butter and honey, apples and nuts—the nuts suggesting a sort of game of riddles which they play around the table. The boys are sent to bed, but the rest find this rather feeble amusement so interesting that they sit up all night at it. Honest, however, gets sleepy and nods; and perhaps there is a slight suggestion that if the real truth were told the conversation is hardly brilliant enough to keep awake for, in the fact that it is Honest who is overcome. But it is worth while for us to sit up with them in order to hear the last part of Honest's conversation about the young man and the old man who went on pilgrimage. Honest is an old man, but he is free from all prejudice and smallness, nor does he grudge the young and suspect that the old are being pushed aside. He admits that the young man has more credit of his pilgrimage, because his passions are stronger and resistance requires more effort; nor does he add, as he might well have done, that there is another side to this, and that older men, whose vitality indeed is less, have also lost those safeguards of youthful idealism, which are so effective as weapons of defence. Indeed, the old have their own peculiar temptations, which, on the whole, are probably more dangerous than those of youth.

At daybreak the family rise and hold a sort of Bible Reading or Experience Meeting upon the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which is distinguished by one fine thought of Great-heart's. His answer to the question, why Jesus seems to have no form or comeliness, is, 'Because they want that eye that can see into our prince's heart.' That is a true and noble canon for judging Jesus Christ. Without it men may say any unworthy thing they please about Him. It is a matter of taste, and if they see no beauty that they should desire Him, it will be difficult to convince them; but those who have the eye that can see into His heart, princely and wounded both, see Him so fair and wonderful that there is none in all the earth to compare with Him.

Slaygood.

Gaius leads them out of hunting in the fields, the quarry being giants as usual. This Slaygood has generally been taken for one more aspect of persecution, one of the blood-men that were out after Nonconformists in those days. So little is told us about him that it is very difficult to come to any definite conclusion. In Mr. Feeble-mind's account of himself, he says, 'When he had got me into his den, *since I went not with him willingly*, I believed I should come out alive again.' This appears to hint at some form of sin rather than a persecuting State; but the matter is difficult to decide, and perhaps the main use of the incident is to introduce Mr. Feeble-mind, who is certainly the most interesting character we have met for some time. Slight, however, though the account of the fight is, and presenting no new features beyond those which we have seen in former encounters, there is the zest of undisguised desire for revenge, which reminds us of that grim story of the execution of Robespierre, when, as the head fell from the block, a woman in the crowd was heard to cry, 'A second time!' When Slaygood is slain his head is brought away to the inn and set up upon a pole.

Mr. Feeble-mind

This pilgrim is found in the hands of Slaygood, who is rifling him, as a preparation for eating him. He tells us his own story, how he was a sickly man, and had become a pilgrim because Death had knocked at his door once a day. How he lived in the town of Uncertain and had no strength either of body or of mind. It is a pitiful character, full of morbid self-consciousness, and, indeed, self-pity, but it is a piece of most excellent writing in which Bunyan describes it, and the end redeems it all, 'As to the main, I thank Him that loved me, I am fixed: My way is before me, my mind is beyond the river that has no bridge—though I am, as you see, but of a feeble mind.'

Mr. Feeble-mind seems to stand for the seventeenth-century form of that habit of doubting which has become a chronic and recognized form of spiritual disease in our later time. There is, however, in Feeble-mind a spark of faith beneath the doubt, and at the beginning of the passage which we have already quoted, as the brilliant conclu-

sion to his account of himself, Bunyan puts the sidenote, 'Mark this.'

'This I have resolved on, to wit, to *run* when I can, to *go* when I cannot run, and to *creep* when I cannot go.'

The anticlimax of running, going, and creeping reminds us of Isaiah's famous verses (40³¹), and it must be remembered that while the pace is lessening both in Isaiah and in Feeble-mind, the difficulty and the courage may be increasing correspondingly, so that what appears to be an anticlimax may really in God's eyes be a climax after all.

The whole character of Feeble-mind is tenderly drawn, and shows how gently the weak are judged by strong men like John Bunyan. In a later passage, when they are preparing to set out, Feeble-mind's objections to going with them give us a passage in the style of Dickens' caricature. He tells us that he shall like no laughing, and that he shall often be offended, so as to be a burden both to himself and to his companions. In this passage the tenderness of Bunyan has certainly grown very bold. The weak brother taking himself for granted in this fashion becomes quite intolerable. To know oneself weak is bad enough, but to arrange for being weak all through the journey, and to confess oneself a burden and a nuisance to other pilgrims, is for any man to take himself with indefensible seriousness. Stevenson was not too severe when he said, 'for, to be quite honest, the weak brother is the worst of mankind.'

This very self-centred question, with his miserable little envyings of better men, and his perpetually repeated use of the first person singular, does certainly seem to be treated with an unnecessary consideration. Surely the best treatment for such men is to attempt at least to awaken in them some trace of shame and anger, which may be the beginning of their strength. Yet Great-heart is as kindly as Christian, willing to make any sacrifices so that he may have this poor creature's company; and the whole passage shows us how far Christianity is prepared to go in its defence and kindness towards the unfit. It has indeed a right to do so, for it is the only system which not only compassionates but changes the unfit, and makes the weak become strong.

Fearing and Not-right.

Through a question of Mr. Honest's the conversation turns upon Fearing, who, it seems, belongs to

that same town of Stupidity which is also the native town of Honest, and who turns out to be Feeble-mind's uncle. Honest, with his usual plain speech, and perhaps unnecessary candour, says, 'You have his whitely look, a cast like his with your eye, and your speech is much alike.' As for Mr. Not-right, he is merely incidental, and seems to be introduced for no other purpose than that expressed in the verses sung by Mr. Feeble-mind, to show how some, by escaping immediate danger, run upon ultimate destruction, while others by undergoing loss and trial acquire ultimate gain. It is but another variant upon the old text and principle, 'He that saveth his life shall lose it.' There is a parting feast, a disclaimer of any reckoning of the hospitalities of the house (which again makes us wonder what manner of inn this may be), and the pilgrims begin to prepare for the journey. There follows that curious passage between Great-heart and Feeble-mind, which we have already noticed, in which Feeble-mind protests his many weaknesses as the reason why he should be left behind to go on his way alone, and Great-heart insists upon self-

denial for his sake, which will enable him to find the company of the rest congenial. Just at this point there appears another weak pilgrim, Mr. Ready-to-Halt, with his crutches in his hand. The crutches appear to be the promises of Scripture, or indeed any other help than a man's own faith, will, and energy. His advent is immensely cheerful to Feeble-mind, and indeed the two are well matched. The collection of weaklings is growing now, and before long we shall have a company like that of Lk 14²¹. It may, indeed, have been this passage that was in the mind of Bunyan. Certainly the insistence upon the care and compassion of Christianity for weaklings is intentional and emphatic.

So long as men were merely weak, not bad,
He loved men.¹

They go on their way to the accompaniment of profitable talk concerning Christian and Faithful, but it must be confessed that the talk never rises above an extremely dull level, and is little else than mere recapitulation of details from Part One.

¹ Cf. Browning.

Literature.

THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL.

It is a curious experience for a reader to come from a study of the Robertson Smith case, as it is so admirably retold by Dr. Sutherland Black in Smith's biography, to the Kerr Lectures for 1911-1912. The Kerr Lectures were delivered in the United Free Church College, Glasgow, by the Rev. Adam C. Welch, Theol. D., their subject being *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom* (T. & T. Clark; 7s. 6d. net). Dr. Welch is indebted to Robertson Smith. What writer on the Prophets is not? But how calmly he takes for granted all that Robertson Smith fought and suffered for. 'The adversary,' as Smith used to call his opponents, concentrated on the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy. Mosaic indeed! Dr. Welch deliberately declines to discuss the authorship, for he allows nothing to distract his mind from his own proper subject, which is the religion. But the position in which he places that book in this volume is enough. He places it last of all, after Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. That is enough to show that the Prophets did not derive

their religion from the author of Deuteronomy, but the author of Deuteronomy from the Prophets.

Nevertheless this is not a book that the most conservative student of the Old Testament need be afraid of. Its subject, as we have said, is the religion of Israel. And as students of the religion we are not seriously concerned with the question of precedence. If Isaiah was more and Moses less of an original force in the history of religion, what does it matter? It is the history of religion that matters. And Dr. Welch has described the religion throughout the period of the kingdom with extraordinary success. One thing comes out most conspicuously. The historical method makes the religious supremacy of Israel more marvellous than ever; more than ever we ask with astonishment how it came to pass that this least of all lands, and this most stubborn of all people, were most highly honoured and most religiously endowed.

THE SCIENCE OF LOGIC.

Dr. P. Coffey, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in Maynooth College, has been favourably